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Work: jobs and career

A Talking informally about your work or career

Well, to get ahead¹ in a job like mine you have to be prepared to take on² a lot of responsibility and work long hours.

- ¹ be successful in your job
- ² accept a particular job or responsibility

When the boss first took me on³ he filled me in⁴ on what the job involved, but he didn't tell me I would have to do so much travelling!

- ³ began to employ me
- ⁴ gave me the information I needed in order to do something

Well, I stood down⁵ as Chairman in 1998, and Mary Wilmott took over⁶. As you all know, she has carried out⁷ some important reforms in the company and has been very successful.

- ⁵ left an important job or official position so that someone else can do it instead
- ⁶ started doing a job or being responsible for something that someone else was doing or was responsible for before you
- ⁷ done or completed something, especially something important

I'm 60 now, so I think it's time for me to step down⁸ and hand over⁹ to a younger person.

- ⁸ leave your job, especially so that someone else can do it
- ⁹ give someone else responsibility or control

B More work-related phrasal verbs

Ellen: Frances, do you think you could fix up a staff meeting for me? [provide or arrange something for someone]

Frances: Yes, I'll do that. When were you thinking of?

Ellen: Well, let's pencil it in for Friday morning and see whether everyone else is free then. [arrange for something to happen on a particular date, knowing the arrangement might be changed later]

Keith: Why are you back home already? Did you knock off early today? [informal: stop working, usually at the end of a day]

Bob: I wish I could say that. The truth is I've just been laid off. [lost your job because there is no work for you to do, from the verb lay off someone]

Keith: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

Veronica: Did you ever follow up that phone call you had with the oil company? [do something in order to make the effect of an earlier action or thing stronger or more certain]

Jim: No, I really should do something about it.

Mona: It's amazing how much we can get done when we all pull together, isn't it? [work as a group in order to achieve something]

Ricky: Yes, although sometimes it's also good if people just leave you to it. [informal: go away from someone so that they do something by themselves or so they can continue what they are doing]

Exercises

45.1 Write down phrasal verbs from the opposite page which are:

- connected with finishing work (four answers)
- connected with making arrangements (two answers)

45.2 Complete this text, using verbs or particles from the opposite page.

Jill has been (1) on more and more responsibility at work. She was only taken (2) two years ago but she has already managed to (3) out a very successful reorganisation of office procedures. Her boss just (4) her to it and Jill then filled him (5) when she had arranged everything. She has always been very good at getting people to (6) together and at motivating them. She's someone who will really get (7) and make a successful career. In fact I'm sure that when the boss eventually (8) down, he'll (9) over the running of the company to her. He can be sure it will be in safe hands!



45.3 Write suitable answers to the questions below, using phrasal verbs from the opposite page.

- Shall I tell you what's been going on while you were on holiday?
Yes, please
- Could you deal with the letters we've had in response to our advert?
Certainly, I'll
- Could you arrange an appointment for me with the bank manager?
Yes, I'll
- Why did you stand down as Director?
Well, I've been doing it for years and I thought it was time to
- Can we arrange a meeting for some time next week?
Sure, why don't we

45.4 Answer these questions about your own working life, using full sentences.

- What kind of tasks do you have to carry out each day?
- At what time do you knock off each day?
- Do you know anyone who has ever been laid off?
- What qualities do you think you need to get ahead in the job that you do?
- What did you do to get taken on for the job that you now have?